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Title: Need to formulate an action plan to check elephants depredation in Assam.

SHRI BIJOY HANDIQUE (JORHAT): People in Assam, particularly living in villages and tea estates near forests, have been living in great danger caused by elephants' depredation leaving a trail of injury and loss of human lives, damages to crops and houses. The situation poses a grave concern to all the conservationists who are committed to protecting wild life and promoting the concept of co-existence and understanding between men and animals. Such a situation will lead to a confrontation between humans and wild lives, which will be a loser in the long run.

There is no doubt that humans have encroached upon the elephants' habitats and have scared them out of forests. But it is not enough to argue that since humans have intruded into the forests, the elephants have no other way but to come out and stray into human habitation.

Since the phenomenon of elephants' depredation has been a common occurrence in Assam, it is imperative for Government to formulate an action plan by allowing trapping of at least a hundred elephants a year and selling them to zoos and parks and forest departments in the country as well as abroad, evolving a way out with Insurance companies for providing insurance cover against death, injury and damages to crop and property in the depredation prone areas and finally driving them back to the forests. Our approach to the problem needs to be pragmatic, realistic and at the same time eco-friendly.